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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 14 titles deal with the following topics: observable behaviors and verbal responses elicited by a specific listening task; the relationship between oral spelling, auditory sequencing, and vocal rhythm; the effect of listening instruction on listening test scores; the relationship between auditory learning and mental aptitude, signal distortion, and speech compression; the role of puppetry within the context of the creative-expression language arts curriculum; techniques for teaching word meanings; the effects of background noise on listening comprehension of primary children; factors affecting kindergarten children's invented spelling; an analysis of the ineffectiveness of formal grammar instruction; the development of listening and metalistening skills in young children; attitudes of elementary teachers toward creative self-expression; the effects of symbolic play on aural language comprehension in young native American children; an analysis of three methods of teaching sentence construction to slow-learning eighth grade students; and a comparison of two methods of teaching spelling to low-ability ninth grade students. (NAI)

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Language Arts Skills and Instruction:

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Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

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A COMPARISON OF TWO METHODS OF TEACHING SPELLING: AS ADMINISTERED TO LOW ABILITY NINTH-GRADE STUDENTS

AN EXPLORATION OF FIRST, THIRD, AND SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS' OBSERVABLE BEHAVIORS AND VERBAL RESPONSES ELICITED BY A SPECIFIC LISTENING TASK
Order No. 7804241

ADAMS, Caryl Leah, Ph.D. Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 1977. 113pp. Major Professor: Dr. Terry R. Shepherd

Purpose: The major purpose of this study was to observe elementary school students' overt behaviors during a listening task, to investigate the relationship of these factors to the child's comprehension of the content of the task shown by free retelling and responses to questioning, and to investigate how these observable behaviors and comprehension related to the child's classroom listening performance and academic ability and performance as assessed by classroom teachers.

Method: Twenty first grade, twenty third grade, and twenty sixth grade students were randomly selected from elementary attendance centers of a school district in southern Illinois.

The researcher, interacting with each subject individually, read orally a passage from a basal text appropriate to students' grade level.

During the experimental setting, the examiner observed behaviors of the subject which were felt to have possible relevance to listening.

Following the listening task, each student retold its content and the examiner questioned the child with literal level questions and questions requiring inferential and evaluative judgments.

Each subject's classroom listening performance, academic ability and performance, and classroom listening instruction were assessed through a teacher questionnaire.

Analysis of Data: Audiotapes of each experimental situation were transcribed and comprehension ratings made of each child's retelling, responses to literal questions, and to inferential and evaluative questions. In addition, overall comprehension ratings were calculated for each subject.

A variety of statistical analyses were performed to determine the significance or correlation level between comprehension scores, examiner-observed behaviors during the experimental setting, and classroom listening performance.

Findings: Multiple regression analyses revealed that observed behaviors of maintaining eye contact most of the time during listening, of appropriate facial expressions, and twisting and shifting body position were comprehension-enhancing; the behavior of excessive hand movements was comprehension-detracting.

Regression analyses revealed no significant relationship existed between overall listening comprehension in the experimental setting and classroom listening (determined by teacher judgment), nor between listening comprehension and academic ability and performance (determined by teacher judgment).

A t-test for differences between means showed that the mean comprehension score of students easily distracted visually during listening was not significantly different from the mean score of students not evidencing this characteristic. Chi-square analysis revealed these students were not perceived by classroom teachers as being easily distracted during classroom listening. Comprehension scores of subjects indicating being auditorily distracted during listening did not differ significantly from the remainder of the group.

The Scheffé Procedure revealed that the mean comprehension scores of sixth grade students were significantly better than first grade students. (.05 level)

Pearson Correlation Coefficients calculated between retelling and literal comprehension--.6217; between retelling and inferential and evaluative comprehension--.6869; between literal and inferential and evaluative comprehension--.5174. All correlations were significant at .001 level.

No significant correlation existed between comprehension on questions involving inferences and evaluative judgments and subjects' academic ability and performance.

All items on the teacher questionnaire were significantly correlated at the .001 level. Responses indicated that very little actual classroom listening instruction was taking place.

Interest in subject matter of the listening task appeared to have influence on its retention. A child's background of experience was reflected in his verbal responses.

Implications: The relationship of what appears to be listening related behaviors to listening comprehension can only lead to interesting speculations at this time. Further research should be done in order to help determine more exactly the role of these behaviors in listening comprehension.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORAL SPELLING, AUDITORY SEQUENCING, AND VOCAL RHYTHM Order No. 7807095

BAILEY, Robert Lincoln, Ph.D. Indiana State University, 1977. 92pp. Director: Dr. George Early and Chairperson: Dr. Karl Zucker

The major premise of this paper states that children's success in later learning depends on successful resolution of early developmental skills. In order to test this premise the relationship between an academic task of a temporal nature and three temporal tasks with a lower level of developmental complexity was examined. All four tasks were carefully analyzed in terms of input, output, and feedback format to emphasize the role of task analysis.

Sixty-six normal third-grade students were administered a group intelligence test, an oral spelling test, and three measures of low-level temporal abilities. The three low-level temporal tasks consisted of two auditory sequencing tasks and a vocal rhythm test.

Results of the study showed mental ages and the scores in all three temporal tasks to be highly correlated with oral spelling scores. Multiple regression equations indicated that all three temporal tasks were significant predictors of oral spelling, independent of mental age. Two of the temporal tasks--vocal rhythm and one of the auditory sequencing tasks--were better predictors of oral spelling results than was mental age. Findings indicated that good oral spellers performed significantly better on all temporal tasks and intelligence tests than poor oral spellers.

THE EFFECT OF LISTENING INSTRUCTION ON LISTENING TEST SCORES Order No. 7731121

BARKER, John Forest, Ed.D. Brigham Young University, 1977. 275pp. Chairman: Eldon H. Puckett

The purpose of this study was to determine if a significant difference existed in listening achievement among 185 third and 176 fifth grade students randomly assigned to direct, indirect and regular instruction groups. Treatment was confined to lessons which developed ability to listen for details, details in sequence, main ideas, directions, inferential responses and fact and opinion. Listening was measured by pretest and posttest gains on the Stanford Achievement Test and the author-constructed Six Listening Skills Test.

Generally, pupils who received either direct or indirect listening instruction made significantly larger gains than those who received no specific listening instruction.

AN INVESTIGATION OF AUDITORY LEARNING IN RELATION TO MENTAL APTITUDE, SIGNAL DISTORTION, AND SPEECH COMPRESSION

COREY, Jon Michael, Ph.D. University of Southern California, 1977. Chairman: Professor Robert A. Smith

A series of investigations explored the feasibility of substituting listening for reading competencies in Army training, with special reference to lower aptitude individuals.

Findings. A preliminary survey for comparing the preference for learning by listening versus learning by reading indicated that: (1) Preference for learning by listening ranged from 14 percent for individuals having high reading abilities to 45 percent for individuals having poor reading abilities.

(2) Preference for learning by listening is related to mental aptitude, ranging from 8 percent for high mental ability individuals to 28 percent for low mental ability individuals. (3) Overall, approximately 25 percent of a sample of 300 individuals preferred to learn by listening rather than by reading.

Results of five experiments using time-compressed speech indicated that: (1) Speech rate rather than signal distortion due to the compression process appeared to be the major cause for decreased comprehension of materials presented at fast rates of speech. This was true for both high and low mental aptitude individuals. (2) Scaling of reading passages for difficulty by direct magnitude estimation and a readability formula correlated highly with scaling of these materials by other researchers using Cloze procedures, recall tests, and category scaling techniques. (3) Comprehension of listening passages decreased as a function of mental aptitude and the difficulty level and speech rate of the listening selection. This was true for difficulty both between and within listening materials. No differences were found in the type of information learned by high and low mental aptitude individuals although the latter learned a lesser amount from a listening selection. (4) Using the time saved by the time compression of speech to present additional, new information did not increase the amount learned over that obtained by presenting less information in uncompressed format.

Conclusions. The results of these investigations suggest that: (1) Many individuals of low reading ability prefer to learn by listening and can be expected to learn many kinds of prose materials as well by listening as by reading. Therefore, provision of listening materials as well as reading materials in training and job situations may provide significant motivation to study for many lower mental aptitude individuals. (2) Moderate degrees of speech compression may improve listening efficiency (amount learned per time spent listening) of individuals of high, average, and low mental aptitude. (3) Because listening efficiency may improve with the use of time-compressed speech, the time saved might be used to improve learning by focusing attention through use of inserted questions or by selectively emphasizing certain aspects of the material. However, results indicate that simply repeating a message, or adding new information in the time saved by the compression process, is not likely to increase the amount learned over that learned by listening to an unelaborated selection presented once at a normal (175 wpm) rate of speech. (4) Reading materials can be scaled for listening difficulty by magnitude estimation, a readability formula. Cloze techniques, recall tests, or direct category scaling procedures. Correlations among these methods range from .85 to .95. (5) Time compression/expansion technology can be used to "tailor" listening materials to fit fixed time slots. When coupled with the inexpensive, easy-to-transport cassette recorders currently available, this technology permits flexible use of audio materials.

(Copies available from Micrographics Department, Doheny Library, USC, Los Angeles, CA 90007.)

PUPPETRY EDUCATION: ITS ROLE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE CREATIVE-EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM

Order No. 7808708

EHLE, Maryann J., Ed.D. West Virginia University, 1977. 487pp.

The purpose of this study was to design and implement a model which would define and describe puppetry education and its potential to nurture and develop creative language expression within the elementary language arts curriculum.

Chapter I, PUPPETRY EDUCATION AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, expressed: (1) need for a study aimed at definition and description in the area of puppetry education, (2) implications of puppetry in the area of creative-expressive language arts curriculum development, (3) literature relating to the state of the field, (4) guiding questions for further development, (5) objectives of the study, (6) planned participation-observation research methodology, and (7) overview of content.

Chapter II, A REVIEW OF LITERATURE, was a logical outgrowth of the first chapter and included expansions on the state of the field and the need for definition and description of puppetry education. Within chapter two a model of puppetry education was developed. The model evolved through an investigation of the commonalities shared by proponents of both puppetry and language arts as means of developing creative language expression. Each of three major sections of the chapter compared the research/writings of both groups on fundamental dimensions of the child's potentials for language development, creative expression, and self-realization. Each section concluded with a table summarizing the strong degree of unity between the powers and goals of puppetry and language arts on each of these fundamental dimensions. The chapter concluded with a design of the model of puppetry education.

Chapter III, IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MODEL OF PUPPETRY EDUCATION, outlined the program of six mini-modules developed to implement the model of puppetry education. Together the six mini-modules represented a practical synthesis of the findings from the literature cited throughout the development of the puppetry education model. Designed as self-contained units of study, the mini-modules provided a detailed instructional resource of objectives, materials, experiences, and ideas for realizing the goals of language arts through puppetry education.

Chapter IV, DESCRIPTION OF PUPPETRY EDUCATION MODEL IMPLEMENTATION, described the implementation of the puppetry education model/program of six mini-modules within a fourth grade classroom. It included all definitive/descriptive data (daily logs, pictures, child-writings, child-quotations) of the subjects' reactions to and interactions with each mini-module. The synthesis of this data for each mini-module provided a detailed descriptive and pictorial account of a practical application of the puppetry education model. This chapter concluded with a summary of the major tenets of the model which could be perceived through logs, pictures, child-writings, and child-quotations.

Chapter V, SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS, summarized the information presented throughout the study. The conclusions in general clearly identified, described, and defined puppetry as a legitimate and dynamic component of the language arts curriculum. It was concluded in further detail, as indicated in model, program, and log, that puppetry education could: 1. stimulate creative imagination, thought, and play with ideas, objects, and language (spoken, written, dramatized, kinesic). 2. satisfy the need for an outlet for creative expression, for free expression of emotions, and expression of the affective self. 3. nurture expression and interpretation of oral, written, kinesic, and art languages. 4. develop cooperative groupwork skills. 5. provide opportunity for linguistic, kinesic, and artistic playing out of life problems. 6. develop confidence and knowledge of self, others, and environment through intuitive learning and play. On the basis of a review and analysis of the first four chapters of the study nine specific ideas suggesting further investigation were identified and described in the concluding section of this chapter. Concluding comments centered on the implications of puppetry for teacher education and language arts curriculum development.

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FOUR TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING WORD MEANINGS WITH THIRD AND FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS Order No. 7803224

GIPE, Joan Patricia, Ph.D. Purdue University, 1977. 197pp. Major Professor: Richard D. Arnold

The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of four methods for teaching word meanings. Aspects of language, cognitive development, and memory processes relevant to learning words defined as labels for concepts, and their meanings, provide the theoretical rationale for the study. Learning word meanings can be viewed as an association task (Simon & Feigenbaum, 1964; Wickelgren, 1972), whereby unknown meanings can become known by being presented in connection with a known word of the same meaning (Mandler & Dean, 1969; Thomson & Tulving, 1970). Learning word meanings also can be viewed as a hierarchically organized categorical task (Collins & Quillian, 1969, 1970), whereby meaning can be taught by their inclusion in a category with other known words having similar meaning (Bower, et al., 1969; Smith et al., 1974). Finally, learning word meanings can be viewed as an interactive long-term memory process of concept development (Lindsay & Norman, 1972; Rumelhart, Lindsay, & Norman, 1972; Sticht et al., 1974), whereby meanings become known by defining the word, illustrating its usage, and providing for application of its use (Hare, 1975; Wittrock et al., 1975).

The methods developed for this study include an association, a category, and a context method. Dictionary practice was considered a fourth method. Students with complete sets of data on experimental tasks in four third (N = 93) and four fifth grade (N = 78) classrooms in a rural midwestern school, serve as subjects to test four hypotheses: 1. Vocabulary retained will differ for the four methods. 2. Vocabulary retention will be greatest for the context method. 3. Regardless of reading achievement, vocabulary will be retained with all methods. 4. Regardless of sex of subject, vocabulary retention will occur with all methods.

Specially designed worksheets are used as instructional materials. The set of worksheets corresponding to the association method teaches word meanings by pairing synonyms. Worksheets for the category method use category labels with provision for student participation to teach word meanings. Worksheets for the context method teach word meanings in defining and illustrative contexts with provision for student application of the new word meanings. Common dictionary practice consists of copying definitions and writing sentences.

The study is a repeated measures 4 x 4 Latin square type design in which each subject receives each method. Subjects are taught twelve words a week for eight weeks. Performance scores on eight evaluation tasks consisting of twelve sentences, each containing a blank for insertion of a new word taught during the preceding week, are the dependent variable.

It is reported that the methods used to teach word meanings are different in effectiveness ($p<.001$). The context method is significantly better ($p < .001$) than the other three methods for both grade levels. Good readers perform significantly better ($p < .001$) than poor readers. The context method is the preferred method for both these groups. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Overall improvement for the words taught is significant ($p < .001$) for both grade levels.

Findings are supportive of instruction in teaching word meanings, especially instruction which includes using new words in sentences which provide examples of usage in the context of familiar events. Associating new words with familiar synonyms is also supported. Use of category labels and dictionary practice is not strongly supported. Results of the study indicate that an interactive model for cognitive processes provides useful information for studies investigating vocabulary development.

EFFECTS OF IMPOSED BACKGROUND NOISE ON LISTENING COMPREHENSION OF PRIMARY CHILDREN

HANDELSMAN, Mary Crutchfield, Ed.D. University of Southern California, 1977. Chairman: Professor Allen

Problem. The purpose of this study was to observe third-grade students' listening achievement in four different auditory environments. The four environments were: (1) ambient room noise; (2) ambient room noise with imposed white noise; (3) ambient room noise with imposed playground noise; and (4) ambient room noise with music. The auditory environment of ambient room noise alone was used as the control treatment.

The dependent variable under study was the total score of three subtests drawn from the Evan Wright Test of Listening Comprehension (which consists of 10 subtests).

Procedure. This study used a randomized control-group posttest only design with intact classrooms. A random table of numbers was used to assign one of four groups to the control condition (ambient room noise only) and each of the three others to one of the three experimental conditions. It was assumed that each of the four groups was equivalent in listening comprehension skills. No pretests of listening skills were administered to the groups nor were any teacher ratings of students' listening comprehension ability employed.

Treatment of the data. A separate analysis of variance test was conducted for each of the three subparts of the measuring instrument (the Evan Wright Test of Listening Comprehension) as well as for the total score. Each of the analyses of variance tested the variability of the means of the four groups within the study. A one-way analysis of variance was used in this study since no preconceived interaction would be able to occur between any of the four groups. The Scheffé procedure for both the .05 and .01 levels of significance was used to identify any differences between group means. A Cochran C and a Bartlett-Box F Test for Homogeneity of Variance was also used in the analysis.

Selected findings. The three hypotheses of the study were: (1) The imposition of white noise in a normal classroom setting will result in a significantly greater listening comprehension score by third-grade students than will ambient room noise alone. (2) The imposition of continuous playground noise in a normal classroom setting will result in a significantly greater listening comprehension score by third-grade students than will ambient room noise alone. (3) The imposition of music in a normal classroom setting will result in a significantly greater listening comprehension score by third-grade students than will (a) ambient room noise alone, (b) imposed white noise and ambient room noise, and (c) imposed continuous playground noise and ambient room noise. The findings did not support the hypotheses.

Conclusions. The following conclusions were formulated: (1) In normal classrooms most students filter out irrelevant features of the auditory environment. (2) The application of white noise to the educational setting does not appear to result in increased listening comprehension. (3) The imposition of continuous playground noise has no discernible effect on listening comprehension. (4) The application of music to the educational setting does not appear to result in increased listening comprehension.

Recommendations. (1) Students and teachers should be given opportunities to prove to themselves that noise does not significantly affect listening comprehension. (2) Auditory training to identify environmental noises should be given to students so that they can more readily filter out noise not related to a learning task. (3) Students should be instructed that noise is a normal condition in a working world and that a certain level of noise is acceptable. (4) The study should be replicated using (a) increased intensities of auditory environment, (b) a population of children with auditory decoding and encoding disabilities, and (c) different listening tasks.

(Copies available from Micrographics Department, Doheny Library, USC, Los Angeles, CA 90007.)

AN INVESTIGATION TO DETERMINE FACTORS AFFECTING SELECTED KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN'S INVENTED SPELLING

MAYHEW, Dawn Carolyn, Ph.D.
University of Georgia, 1977

Supervisor: Dr. Ira E. Aaron

Purposes of this study were to determine factors affecting spelling strategies used by kindergarten children who know letter names and to determine if three assumptions selected from earlier work in invented spelling were borne out by data obtained from selected pupils. The specific factors investigated include: (1) knowledge of letter-sounds; (2) reading readiness; and (3) sight vocabulary. In addition, the spelling strategies were analyzed to determine frequency of letters selected for long and short vowels.

The term "invented spelling" refers to the spellings children devise within standard orthography for spelling selected words. The spelling is classified "invented" because child strategies are obviously used.

The sample consisted of 106 kindergarten children in the Pittsylvania and Rockingham County School Systems (Virginia). All pupils knew at least 20 names of the letters of the alphabet.

Standardized tests administered were The Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis, Phonemes, and The Metropolitan Readiness Test, Form P, Level I. In addition, Durkin's Test to Identify Early Readers was used to determine sight vocabulary and a measure for phonemically acceptable spellings was devised by the researcher.

The standardized tests were administered in small groups but the sight vocabulary and spelling measures were administered individually. Pupils were shown words on individual cards and asked to read them. Known words were included in the analysis.

To determine spelling strategies, each of 50 words was read, said in a sentence, and then repeated. Pupils selected appropriate letters from 26 magnetic capital letters.

Analysis of variance was used to test the five research hypotheses. In addition, the predictive value of the combination of measures used and the spelling criterion was determined by a multiple step-wise regression analysis. The .05 level of probability was used to designate significance. The remaining data were treated descriptively.

An analysis of the results revealed the following factors that significantly affect invented spelling: (1) knowledge of letter-sounds; (2) reading readiness; and (3) sight vocabulary. The analysis also revealed no significant difference between male and female children on the spelling criterion. In addition, children who use the knowledge of a closely related phoneme to spell a phoneme for which no letter name is obvious score significantly higher on the spelling measure. The identified factors also significantly contribute to the predictive value of the spelling criterion.

Further analysis of the data revealed that 83 percent of the subjects systematically used spelling strategies. Various levels of sophistication were exhibited and the following stages were noted: Stage 1 – Some children (17 percent) made no attempt at spelling words. Stage 2 – Thirty-five percent of the subjects selected a letter representing one phoneme, usually the initial one. Stage 3 – Two phonemes, the initial and one from various positions within the word, were selected by 25 percent of the children. Stage 4 – Some children (10 percent) systematically selected the initial and final phoneme. Stage 5 – These children (9 percent) included vowels between the initial and final phoneme. Stage 6 – The final stage was exemplified by children (4 percent) who had begun to spell some words correctly.

Overall evaluation of invented spelling indicates that the factors investigated (knowledge of letter-sounds, reading readiness, and sight word vocabulary) do affect invented spelling and that children are using specific strategies in a systematic way. Apparently, there are stages of invented spelling that represent various levels of sophistication.

Order No. 77-29,788, 106 pages.

GRAMMAR: FORWARD TO BASICS. AN ANALYSIS OF THE INEFFECTIVENESS OF FORMAL GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION WITH A PROPOSAL FOR CHANGES IN GRAMMAR TEACHING AND A PRELIMINARY FEASIBILITY INVESTIGATION

Order No. 7730590

OSBORNE, Chad Clinton, Ed.D. University of Massachusetts, 1977. 246pp. Director: Professor Earl Seidman

The purpose of this study was to lay a foundation for changing the views and methods of English teachers who want to or have to teach grammar. Nearly a century of educational research has failed to prove positive relationships between those narrow means of abstract sentence analysis known as formal grammar and the wider array of usage, mechanics, and communication skills which many teachers and citizens mean by the term grammar. Based on a variety of research and language study sources, a variety of explanations are given for the inadequacy of formal grammar instruction, and, at the same time, a basis is established in theory and empirical research for alternative means for teaching grammar. The kinds and causes of students' errors are reviewed and seen to be rooted in performance features outside the reach of grammatical instruction. Discussion of sentence thought and meaning and syntactic manipulation for logical and rhetorical effects are highlighted as empirically proven means for error reduction and syntactic growth.

Integrated with relevant findings from research literature are a number of points from the history of grammar teaching, showing the historical tradition of grammar teaching to be strikingly different from the usual notion of traditional grammar teaching. Considerations of meaning, logic and rhetoric, as well as of structure, are seen to have sturdier historical roots than do the reductionist grammar texts which classify only formal characteristics of words and sentences. The study also shows that school children have already mastered the syntactic competence described by both traditional or modern formal grammars, usually by the age of four, thus helping to explain why such instruction does not affect student language performance. In contrast to early mastery of syntax, the study cites evidence that semantic competence develops more slowly, a competence which the simplistic and shallow sentences of grammar texts overlook.

Incorporating conclusions from Vygotsky, Piaget, and Bruner, a theoretical foundation is developed for basing sentence study and production on the relation between thought and language. This foundation stresses meaning, motivation, and manipulation of thought and language--rather than analysis of sentences which relies on abstract terminology and rules. From this empirical and conceptual base, several criteria are developed and used to assess grammar textbooks, revealing their inadequacies. Seven principles, explained with examples of operational implications, are then proposed as the basis for reconceiving and reforming grammar teaching. The results of an implementation questionnaire indicate how each of these seven principles are followed by teachers who have taken a three credit in-service course called "Begone Dull Grammar!" The principles stress having students produce, manipulate and study sentences with pointed meanings, using a variety of single sentence composition forms, and integrating the sentence work with other aspects of both language study and the broader areas of the English curriculum. Teachers in the study reported implementing these changes in grammar teaching to a substantial degree, over 80% indicating each principle was implemented either somewhat, mostly, or always. Thus conclusions based on preliminary data suggest English teachers can be persuaded to replace traditional approaches to formal grammar instruction when given reasons to do so and alternative means to pursue grammar objectives. Slightly less than 20% of the teachers reported encountering barriers to implementing the proposed alternatives to formal grammar, despite their initial estimate that external expectations would be far more potent a force. When basics are taught in our schools they ought not to rely upon the discredited content and methods of formal grammar.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF LISTENING AND METALISTENING SKILLS IN YOUNG CHILDREN Order No. 7800797

RYSBERG, Jane Ann, Ph.D. Arizona State University, 1977. 54pp.

Three-, 5-, 7-, and 9-year-olds were presented with two listening tasks. The first task, in the form of a game, was designed to assess (a) the child's ability to listen to instructions, (b) the child's state of readiness in relation to the demands of the task, and (c) the child's performance on the task under varying instructional conditions. The second task required the child to make judgments on relative listening difficulty when presented an array of metalistening tasks. By age 9, children were still not able to achieve a perfect performance on the Game Task. Yet, by age 5, the children understood many of the metalistening variables for the Judgment Task. This indicates that knowledge of listening variables alone does not determine performance. Three-year-olds achieved significantly lower scores in both the Game and Judgment Tasks than 5-, 7-, and 9-year-olds. Several hypotheses were advanced to account for the disparity in the performance of the youngest children used in this study.

A COMPARISON OF THE ATTITUDES OF ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM TEACHERS IN IOWA AND EXPERTS IN THE FIELD OF LANGUAGE ARTS TOWARD CREATIVE SELF-EXPRESSION IN RELATION TO OTHER ASPECTS OF THE LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM

SILBERBERG GROSSMAN, Cheryl Ann, Ph.D.
The University of Iowa, 1977

Supervisor: Professor Beatrice A. Furner

The purpose of this study was to gain evidence regarding the attitudes of teachers and experts in the field of language arts toward creative self-expression in relation to other aspects of the language arts curriculum. The data were gathered to answer the following questions: 1. What are the attitudes of elementary grade teachers and experts in the field of language arts toward creative self-expression? 2. How do teachers or experts who hold different attitudes toward creative self-expression compare with regard to the time allocations each gives to activities in a hypothetical language arts program for grades K–6? 3. Do teachers and experts express similar attitudes toward selected philosophical statements concerning creative self-expression? 4. Do teachers and experts assign the same time allocations to various aspects of a hypothetical language arts program for grades K–6?

A questionnaire was designed which included a five-point, sixteen item, Likert-scale (responses ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree") covering important issues related to creative self-expression, eight of which were designed to constitute a belief set toward "traditional" views of the language arts and eight designed to constitute a belief set toward creative self-expression, 2) a hypothetical language arts program in which the sample selected could indicate their preferred curricular emphases by allocating one hundred units of time over twelve activities, and 3) a section designed to elicit demographic information. It was mailed to a random sample of 299 Iowa elementary teachers and to 112 experts in the field having met criteria to establish scholarly or research interest in the language arts curriculum. Of the 299 questionnaires mailed to teachers, 238 (79.6 percent) were returned and included for analysis, while 69 (61.6 percent) of the experts returned completed questionnaires.

In order to determine differences between the attitudes of teachers and experts, cross tabulations between the responses of the groups were prepared for the responses to each item on the Likert-scale. Percentages of different responses were then developed as well as a chi-square test of association.

A one-way analysis of variance was employed to compare how teachers with different attitudes towa. I the items on the Likert-scale regarding creative self-expression allocated time over a hypothetical language arts program. Identical analyses were performed for the experts.

To examine the differences between experts and teachers on the hypothetical language arts program the t-statistic was employed.

Based on the statistical analysis and within the limitations of the study, it can be concluded that: 1. A greater percentage of teachers than experts agreed or were neutrally disposed toward "traditional" views of the language arts and a greater percentage of experts than teachers agreed with items stated positively toward creative self-expression. 2. Experts allocated significantly more time units to creative self-expression activities while teachers allocated significantly more time units to skill oriented activities. 3. There is a trend for teachers who agreed with creative self-expression items to allocate more time to creative self-expression activities and those who were neutral or disagreed to creative self-expression items to allocate more time to skill activities. 4. There is a trend for teachers who disagreed to "traditional" items to allocate more time to creative self-expression activities, while those who agreed to "traditional" items allocated more time to skill activities. 5. Experts who did not favor creative self-expression items at the expense of grammar and mechanics and believed that areas of the language arts should be taught as separate courses allocated more time to Functional writing. 6. Experts who favored "traditional" views of the language arts allocated more time to skill activities. Order No. 77-28,461, 216 pages.

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE EFFECTS OF SYMBOLIC PLAY ON AURAL LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION IN FIVE-, SIX-, AND SEVEN-YEAR-OLD NATIVE AMERICAN CHILDREN Order No. 7727765

SILVERN, Steven Bruce, Ph.D. The University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1977. 98pp. Supervisor: Assistant Professor Thomas Daniels Yawkey

The present investigation hypothesized that children who were allowed to act out a story would be better able to recall the story than children who used puppets to represent the story. Evidence which was compiled on 120 Native American children, ages 5-, 6- and 7-years, indicated that the hypothesis was not supported. It seemed that both groups of children performed equally well on a recall task, as measured by a cloze procedure.

Furthermore, the time when the children played seemed not to affect recall ability. Children's scores on the cloze procedure appeared to be comparable despite treatment condition.

While not considered a major finding, the main effect of age was found to be significant. The notion that younger children require special mediational considerations was thus supported.

Significant effects were found for the third major research question, namely: Would play and temporal proximity aid younger children in the comprehension task to a greater degree than older children? It appeared that there were greater differences in play for the younger children given the timing of play, than differences for older children. It seemed possible that the puppets used during the story may have served as an appropriate cue. Puppets used after the story may have only served as a toy. Older children, of course, appeared to do equally well in all the conditions.

AN ANALYSIS OF THREE METHODS OF TEACHING SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION TO SLOW LEARNING EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS IN A SELECTED JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
Order No. 7806761

TONJES, Bruce Alan, Ed.D. The University of Florida, 1977. 147pp. Chairman: Dr. Vincent McGuire

The purpose of this study was to compare three instructional methods in teaching eighth grade slow learners how to write and recognize complete sentences and how to write compound and complex sentences. The study identified poor writers by academic performance during the first semester of eighth grade, by eighth grade state-wide test scores, by performance on a standardized reading test, and by attendance. The study attempted to answer these questions: 1. What were the characteristics of eighth grade students who were judged to be in the lower fifth of their class? 2. How accurately were the students scheduled into slow learner classes by writing ability? 3. What effect did the three instructional methods have on the ability of the students to recognize complete sentences? 4. What effect did the three instructional methods have on students' ability to write sentences with more words per clause, more clauses per t-unit, more words per sentence, more t-units per sentence, and more words per t-unit?

The design of the study resembled the separate sample pretest-posttest control group design but lacked randomization. Students were not randomly assigned to the classes, but the treatment was randomly assigned to the classes.

The null hypotheses which were tested may be summarized as follows: Hypotheses 1–6. There is no significant correlation between writing ability and 1) ability to recognize complete sentences; 2) knowledge of grammar; 3) reading grade level; 4) first semester grade point average; 5) first semester days absent from school; 6) state-wide test scores. Hypothesis 7. There is no significant difference in the mean writing ability of students in the three experimental groups, the one control group, and the rest of the student population at the beginning of eighth grade. Hypotheses 8–14. There is no significant improvement in any of the three experimental groups and one control group in their abilities to 8) write sentences with more words per clause; 9) write sentences with more clauses per t-unit; 10) write sentences with more words per t-unit; 11) write sentences with more words per t-unit; 12) write sentences with more words per sentence; 13) recognize complete sentences; 14) know more traditional grammar and grammar terminology. Hypothesis 15. There is no significant difference in amount of improvement among any of the experimental groups in hypotheses eight through fourteen above.

Data were collected on all eighth graders enrolled at the school and pre- and posttests were administered to the three experimental groups and one control group. Correlation was made by use of Pearson's product-moment correlation. Significant difference and significant improvement was calculated by use of student's t.

Five of the six characteristics, sentence recognition, grammar knowledge, reading grade level, first semester grade point average, and state-wide test scores were correlated with writing ability at the .05 level. Students were scheduled into remedial classes on the basis of writing ability forty percent of the time.

The data showed that combining direct instruction and revision during the same class period to be the only method in which students were able to improve their writing significantly. In only one case was there a significant difference in amount of improvement in comparison to the other experimental methods.

A COMPARISON OF TWO METHODS OF TEACHING SPELLING: AS ADMINISTERED TO LOW ABILITY NINTH-GRADE STUDENTS
Order No. 7731094

WESTON, Paul Francis. Ph.D. Brigham Young University, 1977. 147pp. Chairman: Ruth K. Hammond

The purpose of this study was to determine if the Visualization Impress Method (VIM) or the test-study-test method of teaching spelling significantly improved the spelling achievement, over a 13-week period, of low ability ninth-grade students at Oak Grove High School in San Jose, California. Subjects consisted of 41 randomly selected students. Achievement was measured in a pre/post-test design with the spelling subtests of the WRAT and CTBS and a teacher-made test. In order to determine significance, t-tests were utilized.

Results indicated that both the Visualization Impress Method (VIM) and the test-study-test method had a positive effect on spelling achievement when used in conjunction with motor-perceptual activities. It was concluded that VIM and the test-study-test method of spelling instruction are effective in improving the spelling achievement of low ability ninth-grade students when used in conjunction with motor-perceptual activities.

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